



DISCUSSION NOTES

Ogemaw County Iron Belle Trail Kick-Off Meeting

April 18, 2017 1:00 pm

Michigan Works! Office 2389 M-76, West Branch, MI

Discussion of original suggested route: Rose City Road from eastern county line through Rose City (where Iosco County/Plainfield Twp. is planning their IBT route) then head south within Consumer's Energy-owned utility corridor about 10 miles to M-55, then head west on M-55, link to existing West Brach River Trail, then follow in-use railroad corridor northwest into Roscommon County/St. Helen area.

- Consumer's Energy 10 mile long corridor from Rose City Rod to M-55: Mostly in farmland; very hilly with several water and road crossings. Standard lease would be \$1,000/mile/year for 5 year agreement and would also need farmer's permission who farm that corridor (they lease land from Consumer's). Ask if they would negotiate price of lease with DNR.
- M-33 has 130' R-O-W and M-55 has 100' R-O-W. Could accommodate a 10-12' pathway. However, meeting participants do not want the trail along such high-speed and higher traffic volume roads. Not a comfortable environment for a trail user.
- Rail-with-Trail route – several areas of wetlands; likely conflict with ORV users along parallel ORV trails and that St. Helen Trail is a dirt road; issues with dust/conflicting users. Logging trails/activity also nearby.
- + Rose City is a key destination as no services for 15+ miles between there and Hale in Iosco County.
- + Rifle River Rec Area is a key recreation/tourism destination.
- + Road shoulders have been widened (3') on Rose City Road from Rose City to County Line (note that MDOT bike/road map is not up to date); potential to extend 2 more feet on each side for bike lanes for IBT route? MDOT TAP grant would fund a widened paved shoulder, but DNR Trust Fund grant will not fund this as it would be considered a roadway improvement and not a separate recreational trail facility.
- + Old railroad corridor by Lupton, north of Rose City Rd. – potential route option? Would require crossing on Rose City Rd.
- + City of West Branch is important to connect to for their services, shopping, lodging and existing Riverwalk trail.

Discussion of Other Potential Routes:

- + Maes Rd. (potential future trail connection to Ogemaw Twp. /Ogemaw Springs) and Grey Rd. in Ogemaw Twp. also have recently widened road shoulders. Ogemaw Twp. has started plans for their non-motorized infrastructure.
- + State Road, Henderson Lake Road and Sage Lake Road will be undergoing a \$2 million repaving project in 2017.
- Scribner Rd. (sand/gravel) narrows and would need to be widened. Fast-moving vehicles/dirt bikes/ORVs on back roads such as Scribner, Sage Lake and Stoney Ridge Road would need to be widened. Difficult to put paved trail along dirt road and keep motorized users off the trail.
- M-33 to State Road to Fairview: high speed traffic along M-33; bad visibility at intersection of State Road and Campbell Road. Might be possible to pursue Safe Routes to School funding for connecting the High School at State/M-33 into the City?
- + Fairview Road down from Rose City Road down to West Branch Riverwalk: Fairview is more scenic and lower traffic volumes. However some topography and R-O-W is only 66' wide. Would need easements (Road Commission had to obtain some easements for their work along this road.)
- + Dual trail for snowmobile use in winter is preferred, especially along Fairview Road so that snowmobilers can access trails and services/lodging/gas in West Branch. Currently no trail connection north of the City for snowmobiles. Snowmobile Club HQ is at SE corner of Fairview and Rose City Rd. Would make a nice Iron Belle Trail trailhead location too. Note that snowmobile trail use would likely require the trail surface to be crushed limestone instead of asphalt.
- + Utilizing the Fairview Road connector to West Branch would also connect to the Ogemaw Hills Pathway system for hikers, mountain bikers and XC skiers. Parking lot and portable RR (seasonal?) available.
- + Might be able to utilize parts of utility line corridor along south side of Rose City Rd.
 - Issue with topography and sightlines on Rose City Rd. west of Rose City.
 - Several wet areas/water xings along Rose City Road east of Rose City.
 - Will need to minimize tree clearing if putting the trail on DNR property.
- o Potential to use existing two-track/snowmobile trails in NW part of the county for IBT route instead of along road R-O-W?

Overall IBT trail route preference:

Place trail through wooded and State Land, off major high-speed roads as much as possible.

Place trail along Rose City Road running E-W, with “dog leg” trail connection along Fairview Road south into West Branch. Approx. 34.8 miles.

This route provides connections to City of West Branch, Rifle River Rec Area, Rose City, snowmobile club parking lot (trailhead opportunity), Ogemaw Hills Pathway and State Land; enviro. ed. opportunities where going through Kirtland’s Warbler habitat; draws birders.

Potentially sign the trail with wayfinding signs directing trail users to other areas in the County for recreation/amenities. I.e., Mills Twp. has 3-4 campgrounds available for use often when the RRRRA Campgrounds are filled. Rose City is working on developing campgrounds.

IBT doesn’t have to be paved. Long-distance group rides, such as Pedal Across Lower MI (PALM) riders who ride for 60-100 miles a day can utilize existing well-paved roads and can legally use the road/road shoulder.

MDNR is currently fundraising for an endowment fund to eventually support trail managers with maintenance costs. A general estimate for trail maintenance is about \$1,000/mile/year.

Signage, fencing, bollards, and community “patrolling” would be needed to keep unauthorized motorized trail users off of the Iron Belle Trail route.

Need to discuss with DNR the possibility/feasibility of putting the route through their property.

First goal: apply for one or more Iron Belle Trail grants (next round of applications likely avail. Nov 2017) to conduct a preliminary engineering/feasibility study of the route to get cost estimates and details needed on planned phases for the trail.

Then could apply for MNRTF grant and potentially TAP grant for a select phase of the trail. IBT grant applicant can be any governmental entity or non-profit along the IBT route. TF Grant applicant(s) would be a local unit of government with a current 5-year rec plan. TAP Grant applicant would be Road Commission.

April 18 Ogemaw County IBT Stakeholders Meeting Attendees

	Name	Community, Park or Org.	COMMUNITY	Email
1	Kelli Collins	City of West Branch	City of West Branch	zoning@westbranch.com
2	Mandi Chasey	Ogemaw County EDC/ EMCOG Representative	Ogemaw County EDC	mchasey@michworks4u.org
3	Virginia Linsenman	Ogemaw Township	Ogemaw Township	virginialinsenman@gmail.com
4	Renee Ryland	Ogemaw Township	Ogemaw Township	rylandthomas@sbcglobal.net
5	Yvonne DeRoso	Ogemaw Township DDA and Morris Richardson Real Estate	Ogemaw Township	yvonederosorealtor@gmail.com
6	Greg Morris	Morris Richardson Real Estate/ WB Twp. DDA	Ogemaw Township	greg@mrrehomes.com
7	Janice Fritz	Cumming Township	Cumming Township	janiceafritz@gmail.com
8	Joni VonSteenburg	MDNR - Rifle River Rec Area	MDNR - Rifle River Rec Area	vonsteenburg@michigan.gov
9	David Munson	Logan Township	Logan Township	demunsons@yahoo.com
10	Scott Bell	Ogemaw County PC, WB Twp PC and Lapham Assoc.	Ogemaw County PC/ WB Twp PC/ Lapham Assoc.	scott.bell@laphamassoc.com
11	Abigail Ertel	Huron Pines - Rifle River Prosperity Network	Huron Pines	abby@huronpines.org
12	Bruce Reetz	Ogemaw County Commissioner - District 2	Klacking Twp, WB Twp, City of WB	pickiepaint@netzero.net
13	Ron Quackenbush	Ogemaw County Commissioner - District 3	Rose Twp., Goodar Twp., Cumming Twp., Hill Twp. and Rose City	ronquackenbush@gmail.com
14	Brenda Simmons	Ogemaw County Commissioner - District 4	Churchill Twp, WB Twp and Mills Twp	commissioners@ogemawcounty.mi.gov
15	Bonnie Wichtner-Zoia	MSUE District 4	MSUE	zoia@anr.msu.edu
16	Bill Hendrian	MSUE District 4	MSUE	hendria2@anr.msu.edu
17	Steve Loomis	Ogemaw EDC	Ogemaw EDC	sloomis@First-Federal.com
18	Pat Reinke	Ogemaw County Road Commission		patreinke@ogemawcrc.org
19	Ellen Rush	Klacking Twp.		
20	Heather Grace	City of West Branch	City of West Branch	citymanager@westbranch.com
21	Duane Prince	Mills Township and Ogemaw EDC		dnlprince@core.com
22	Jeramie Brookins	Rose City Council	Rose City	tmc918920@yahoo.com
23	Emily Meyerson	MDNR		meyersone@michigan.gov
24	Rick Deuell	NEMCOG		
25	Stephanie Loria	NEMCOG		sloria@nemcog.org